

1946

Hungry Horse Dam

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Around the first of March, 1946, Mr. J. E. Corette, Vice-President of the Montana Power Company, accompanied by H. H. Cochrane, Chief Engineer of the Montana Power Company, came to Washington. Jack Corette, and I like him personally, came to my office and said:

"Mike, I'm back here for the Montana Power Co. to oppose the appropriations for the transmission line from Kerr Dam at Polson to the Hungry Horse."

I interrupted Mr. Corette, and said: "Just a minute. I want you to know where I stand on this. As far as I am concerned, I do not intend, if I can help it, to allow any individual, organization, or corporation to stand in my way in getting these appropriations. You know what Hungry Horse means to the people of Western Montana; you know that if we do not get this transmission line, there will be no Hungry Horse because we won't have the power to build; and you know that if we don't build Hungry Horse, Flathead Lake will be back where it was three years ago. Incidentally, you know also that when we saved Flathead Lake, we also saved Kerr Dam from being taken over by the Army Engineers."

He replied: "We thought that would be your attitude, but we wanted you to hear our side of the story." I said I'd be glad to listen, and when he completed his statement, I accompanied him to the door and repeated what I had said earlier so that we understood each other perfectly. Mr. Corette, on page 650 of the Hearings before the Appropriations Committee said: "Our position - that is the Montana Power Co. - is that there are a good many reasons why no additional appropriations should be made for the Hungry Horse Project."

During the last hearings on the Hungry Horse, the Flathead Citizens Comm. had a representative in Washington by the name of Al Winkler of Kalispell who is also Governor Ford's Republican Chairman of the Highway Commission. When the Montana Power Co.'s representatives showed up in Washington, where was Al? He was vacationing in Michigan when he should have been on the job in Washington. He was back there to represent the people of the Flathead at their expense and in behalf of the Hungry Horse, but he was spending your money in his own personal interest and not in yours. Al Winkler, the previous month or so had gotten out a four page newspaper about the Hungry Horse which he circulated to 15,000 residents in Western Montana and in which my name was not mentioned once. On May 14, 1946, he wrote me a letter as President of the Flathead Valley Citizens Committee in which he states: " It has been our intention to publish the testimony of the Montana Power Company and your testimony to the House Committee for some time." It hasn't been published yet. Why not, Al? Mr. Winkler, do you remember your letter to me when the Mansfield Authorization Bill for the Hungry Horse passed? No! Well, here it is:

" May 26, 1944.

My dear Mike:

I am sure you can well appreciate, Mike, the sensation and delightful feeling that your telegram of today has created in Kalispell and this vicinity. I certainly want to congratulate you upon the speed with which you were able to get the House to concur in the Senate Amendment. Words fail me to adequately express the debt of gratitude of all of Western Montana; in fact all of Montana owes you. I am sincere when I say that I believe you will find on your ballot this

fall that vote of "thank-you" and expression of
gratitude that is so justly due you.

(Signed) A. Winkler
A. F. Winkler, President
Flathead Valley Citizen's Committee

And Mr. Winkler, do you remember your wire to me from Kalispell,
on Nov. 30, 1945, in re: my work on the Hungry Horse? Here it is:

Hon. Mike Mansfield

"Thank you for your wire. Splendid work, Mike. Entire
Community and state appreciates this fine consideration."

Flathead Valley Citizens Committee,
A. F. Winkler.

Mr. Winkler, do you remember, at the conclusion of your two
pages of testimony before the Interior Appropriations Comm. on March
1, 1946, the remarks of Chairman Jed Johnson of Oklahoma to you?
They are on page 671 of the Comm. Hearings of which you and every
editor and many other people in Flathead County have copies. Let
me refresh your memory and, remember, I'm quoting from the Record:

"We also note the presence of my friend, Mike Mansfield. I
want to say to you that this Committee, in the past, has not
been permitted to forget Hungry Horse largely because of Mr.
Mansfield. I think I should say to you frankly that if there
was ever a doubt about the feasibility of the project on the
part of some of us who have not visited it, that I am sure
we would be inclined to resolve any doubt about Hungry Horse
in favor of it because of the very high regard and respect
and affection that we have for your distinguished Member of
Congress, Mr. Mansfield."

And what did Congressman Rooney of the same Comm. say, on page 695,
Comm. Hearings, after I had completed my testimony on March 13, 1946.

He said, and Mr. Winkler was there:

"Congressman Mansfield, you are entitled to the congratulations and esteem of the people of your state for the very illuminating presentation made here today. In my time in Congress, I have observed no Member so vigorous, so interested in any one matter as you have been in the completion of Hungry Horse Dam."

May I urge all Montanans to read the testimony contained in these Comm. Hearings on the Hungry Horse and the transmission line. The Montana Power Company's testimony will be found on pages 649 to 668 and my testimony will be found on pages 671 to 695. Incidentally, I sent a copy of the Hearings to Mr. Corette.

And now Governor Ford comes out and takes the stump against me. He asks me where I stand on the Authority question. Governor, did you have another meeting with the Montana Power Company before you talked in Missoula? Don't you know, Governor, that I consider every bill that comes before the House on its merits only? Governor, didn't you know that because of the threat of possible competition from proposed valley authorities, that the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Engineers have composed their long standing differences and brought out a program of tremendous river, irrigation and power development? I think that's fine and you know, don't you, that I have always voted for their appropriations? What I want is the development of Montana. I am in favor of first giving the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Engineers a reasonable time to get this job done, because they have been authorized to do so by law, and that law was fought for and voted for by every Congressman and Senator in the 17 Reclamation states. Then, if they fall down, it will be up to us to find new means for the development we must have. That action must come soon as we have already waited too long. There is one thing,

though, that I want understood by everybody, and that is, that as far as I'm concerned, I will never vote or do anything which, in my opinion, will interfere with Flathead Lake at its present level, which will hinder the development of the Hungry Horse, or which will interfere with the development of Montana in general. My district's and my states interests come first. Remember, Governor, I am still the people's Congressman!

Governor, why did it take you so long to come out against the Army Engineers when they were going to take over Flathead Lake? Governor, why didn't you come back to Washington to represent Montana when the Montana Power Company appeared against us? Governor, why did you make the statement in Missoula last night that you were disappointed that Mike Mansfield's voting record was not more generally known? Don't you know it? Of course you do! I've been carrying my record around with me all summer and fall to show to everyong and to answer questions concerning my votes. Why don't you publish it, and bring it to the attention of the people because I'm proud of it. Surely, it isn't because you and my opponent lacks finances, is it? Doesn't the Montana Power Company want my opponent to win? Of course they do. Why, I'm not running against Colonel Rankin alone; I'm running against a Company Colonel's clique. There is Col. Leonard Wing, as campaign manager; there is Colonel Jim Neely, a Montana Power Company employee of Bozeman who is in command of the buses my opponent has travelling around the state; There's Colonel Potter and there is Steve Demers who does not represent the Flathead Indians but does represent the Montana Power Company because he is employed by them at Polson. Colonel Rankin has still to answer the questions as to who is paying for his radio time, his newspaper ads, his buses. Incidentally, I heard that two of his buses had a head-on collision near Anaconda the other day. Who is paying for all this?

Did Bob Corette buy the bus purchased in Butte? My opponent has a lot of questions to answer, and he should come clean.

The Governor refers to me as an "experienced, effective, single-handed campaigner" (for which I thank him) and as one who is exceedingly "crafty". Not crafty, Governor, just honest. Governor, did you say the P.A.C. supports me? That's news to me because they haven't told me so. You know, Governor, that there is no organization behind me in any way, shape or form, either inside or outside Montana, and you know that I am, have been, and will continue to be the people's representative -- and the people's only!